



NRS AND WEB-BASED DATA SYSTEM UPDATES MARCH 2007

REVISED ASSESSMENT POLICY

The current assessment policy was implemented to begin FY 2003-2004. With just a couple of minor changes, it has remained in effect to the present. Over the past few months, OAEL has been in the process of overhauling and creating a new assessment policy that meets the current NRS standards and requirements. The revised assessment policy has been sent to the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for review. A response from USED is expected within the next couple of weeks. Because this policy may have significant changes from the previous version, an effective date of July 1, 2007 is expected. OAEL will work with the VA Adult Learning Resource Center (VALRC) to develop an online training module. Face to face training will likely be available as well. More details will be available in the coming months.



GOAL-SETTING POLICY

As a result of the federal audit, OAEL will be developing a goal-setting policy for all local programs reporting into the Web-based data system. This policy will clearly define when and how goals should be identified and reported. More details will be available in the coming months.

DISTANCE LEARNING POLICY

Several local programs are currently offering some form of distance learning to the students in their area. USED and the NRS will be requiring states to develop a distance learning policy governing how distance learning is reported. The policy guidance is in a draft format currently from USED but covers areas such as:

- Direct contact hours
- Proxy hours – time spent on/completing a task
- Accepted forms/modules/packages for distance learning (i.e. GED Connection, Workplace Essential Skills, etc.)

It is likely that alternate forms of NRS Table 4 will be developed to account for distance students in comparison to traditional students. More details will be available in the coming months.

UNIVERSAL INTAKE FORM

As a result of the federal audit, OAEL will require that all programs, beginning July 1, reporting into the Web-based data system use a universal intake form with all students. This form must appear in each student's folder. Alternate formats are in development currently, including a single-sided, double-sided, and 4x6 index card style. Additionally, the forms may be auto-fill capable allowing for the student to electronically enter the information.



Test and Goal Date Logic

During the audit, date setting was reviewed and concerns were raised about dates for tests and goals appearing before intake. The data system now compares the student's test date and goal date against the intake date. In the data system, all tests and goal dates must be identified on or after the student's intake date. As a reminder, the student's intake date should not be changed from year to year. The intake date should reflect the first time the student entered the program.

Exit Data out of Range Notice and Diagnostic Report

Over the past couple of years, a greater focus on exit dates in the data system has taken place. Exit dates play a critical role in identifying performance on NRS Table 4 (educational gains) and NRS Table 5 (follow-up goals).

- The data system makes it possible to remove an exit date from a previous fiscal year should the student return. However, the local program must remove the old exit date. As a matter of practice, when a student returns to the program, his/her demographic record should be reviewed and updated, including the exit date. For students with an exit date out of range in the current fiscal year, a pop-up warning will appear when saving other updates to the student's demographic information. The old exit date must be removed or updated to the current fiscal year before the new data may be saved.
- A new report has also been added to the diagnostic reports to identify students with out of range exit dates. This report represents all students currently reported for the NRS with an out of range exit date. By the end of the year, this report should be empty for all programs. Local programs must remove or update all out of range exit dates for current fiscal year students.



Highest Grade Completed

A new field has been added to the student's optional demographic information. Local programs may identify the highest grade completed by selecting one of the drop-down options. While this is not required by the NRS, it is very useful for reviewing the types of students participating and reviewing program improvement strategies.

Released from Compulsory Attendance Identification

As a reminder, 16 or 17 year old students may participate in an Adult Education program provided they have been released from compulsory attendance. The data system now includes a check box on the demographics page that must be marked for any student under 18 and at least 16 released from compulsory attendance. By checking the box, the local program certifies that paperwork is on file identifying the release.



Additional Search Criteria for Students

The data system now has additional search criteria to locate a student or group of students. The following additional search fields are included:

- First name
- Gender
- Birth date
- Participant status
- Class number
- Staff name

The goal is to increase/improve the efficiency of the searches. The additional fields should assist with this.

Retaining the Last Student Search

Do you ever get frustrated that the last criteria searched on disappear when you return to the search screen for students? Programming is underway to save the last search. By doing this, you could search an entire class, pull up the results, and then enter assessments or goals by class. This same process could work by staff name or a participant status. Retaining the search should improve the efficiency of entering student data.

FUTURE UPDATES – IN DEVELOPMENT

Additional Class Descriptors

The description of classes is very limited currently. Enhanced descriptions of classes provide greater opportunity for comparison and querying both locally and at the state level. Decisions about the effectiveness of classes, staff, and curriculum choices may be made with improved information. Class descriptors to be included with examples are:



- Class Type: ABE, ESOL, GED, etc.
- Class Enrollment Type: Open, Closed, Managed
- Class Days: Monday, Tuesday, etc.
- Class Hours per Week
- Class Location: School, Church, Workforce Center, etc.
- Class Enrollment: projected enrollment total

Performance Reports

A new report section is being created. It will be titled Program Improvement. In this new section, four new reports are initially planned. The four reports include:

- Program Performance Summary
- Student Report Card
- Class Report
- Staff Report

More details will be provided in the coming months.

